

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – June 21, 2022

Muscle Shoals Utilities Board Evaluating
New PFOA, PFOS Health Advisory Levels



The Environmental Protection Agency has recently issued an updated health advisory lowering the levels for LIFETIME exposure to PFOS and PFOA in drinking water. The new advisory levels are well below what were previously non-detectable levels. This is an advisory only and is not a regulation or law. Due to the newly announced advisory levels recent testing of Muscle Shoals Utilities Board (MSUB) drinking water shows results that are above the EPA's new 2022 advisory levels for PFOS and PFOA, but below those added for GenX Chemicals and PFBS.

While customers need to be aware of this change to the health advisory, MSUB drinking water has been and continues to be safe to drink and for use in bathing, cooking, cleaning, etc. based on current EPA and ADEM regulatory standards. Both the 2016 and 2022 advisory limits are based on a lifetime of daily consumption.

The EPA issued the updated health advisory levels for PFOA and PFOS on an interim basis until the release of permanent regulatory requirements for these two contaminants. The health advisories will, in part, inform their decision-making on setting future enforceable limits. EPA acknowledged that current testing technology cannot detect the presence of PFOA or PFOS at the levels in the new 2022 advisory. Test data for MSUB's drinking water is based on current technology capabilities at third-party independent laboratories.

Chemical	2016 Advisory	2022 Advisory	March 2022
PFOA	70 ppt (combined)	.004 ppt	6.2 ppt
PFOS	70 ppt (combined)	.02 ppt	12 ppt
GenX	NA	10 ppt	Non-Detect
PFBS	NA	2,000	4.0 ppt

**For reference, one part per trillion (ppt) is the equivalent of one square inch in 250 square miles OR one second in nearly 32,000 years OR one ounce in 7.5 billion gallons of water.*

MSUB's Management, Staff and Board of Directors will be evaluating the new advisory levels, on-going test results, and any steps that will need to be taken to come into compliance once EPA sets Maximum Contaminant Levels for PFOA and PFOS under upcoming National Primary Drinking Water regulations. At that time, MSUB will explore grants and other funding options to minimize the impact these regulations could have on customer rates.

These new health advisories are affecting not only MSUB, but Sheffield Utilities, Tuscumbia Utilities, Florence Utilities, Colbert County Water Department and most every water system in Alabama and the country. A full listing of systems in Alabama that have detections can be found on ADEM's website at the following address: **ADEM State-Wide PFAS sampling report** - [2022AllResultsMRL.pdf \(alabama.gov\)](https://www.adem.gov/Portals/0/2022AllResultsMRL.pdf)

PFAS Background:

PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) including PFOA and PFOS, are synthetic chemicals that have been manufactured and used by a broad range of industries since the 1940s. PFAS are used in many applications because of their unique physical properties such as resistance to high and low temperatures, resistance to degradation, and nonstick characteristics. PFAS have been detected worldwide in the air, soil, and water. Due to their widespread use and persistence in the environment, most people in the United States have been exposed to PFAS. Source: www.epa.gov

For Additional Information:

EPA Fact Sheet for Communities - <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-06/drinking-water-ha-pfas-factsheet-communities.pdf>

American Water Works Association Statement on PFAS - <https://www.awwa.org/AWWA-Articles/awwa-statement-on-epa-pfas-health-advisories>